

## **COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009  
**Time:** 10.30 a.m. – 4.45 p.m.  
**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge  
**Present:** Councillor: A G Orgee (Chairman)

Councillors C M Ballard, J D Batchelor, I C Bates, B Boddington, K Bourke, M Bradney, J Broadway, P Brown, T Butcher, C Carter, K Churchill, S Criswell, M Curtis, P J Downes, J Dutton, R Farrer, G Griffiths, G F Harper, N Harrison, D Harty, G J Heathcock, W G M Hensley, S Higginson, P E Hughes, W Hunt, J L Huppert, J D Jenkins, E Kadić, G Kenney, A C Kent, S G M Kindersley, S J E King, V H Lucas, D McCraith, L W McGuire, A K Melton, R Moss-Eccardt, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P Read, J E Reynolds, K Reynolds, P Sales, M Shuter, M Smith, T Stone, J M Tuck, R Turner, J K Walters, J West, F Whelan, K Wilkins, H Williams, M Williamson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

**Apologies:** Councillors B Bean, S A Giles, C Hyams, S F Johnstone, A A Reid, L Sims and D White

### **282. MINUTES: 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2008**

The minutes of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008 were approved as correct records, subject to amending 'Hertford Road' to 'Hartford Road' in Minute 281 (7) of the ordinary meeting, on Huntingdon to St Ives Bus Priority Measures.

Both sets of minutes were signed by the Chairman.

### **283. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Executive Director – Community and Adult Services**

The Chairman reported that the Appointments Committee had recently appointed Rod Craig as the Council's first Executive Director – Community and Adult Services. Rod Craig was currently the Director of Client Group Commissioning for the London Borough of Southwark and would be joining Cambridgeshire in March 2009.

#### **Awards and achievements**

The Chairman led members in offering congratulations to all those whose work had contributed to the following awards and achievements:

- An award to the Research Group from the Local Authorities Research and Intelligence Association for the best piece of research undertaken by a local authority

- Cambridgeshire being ranked as the top County Council out of 388 local authorities for improved performance over the last three years, with 86% of performance indicators showing improvement
- A positive Annual Performance Assessment from the Office of Standards in Education on the Council's services for children and young people, with four of the five Every Child Matters outcomes receiving a score of 3 out of a possible 4 and one receiving a 2
- Improvement of the Council's rating in Stonewall's latest Workplace Equality Index.

The Chairman also led members in thanking staff working for the Council and for partner agencies for their commitment to service delivery during the recent bad weather.

#### Service developments

The Chairman highlighted two recent service developments:

- The relaunching of the County Art Collection as a resource for schools
- The early opening in December 2008 of the Longstanton bypass.

## **284. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following members declared personal interests under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct:

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Details</b>
Ballard	General	Daughter in receipt of adult support services
Batchelor	287 (a)	Chairman of Linton Action for Youth
Bates	General	Member of Cambridgeshire Horizons, the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) and the Police Authority
Bourke	General	Member of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign
Bradney	292 (4)	Governor of Cottenham Village College
Broadway	287 (a)	Vice-Chairman of the Police Authority
Downes	292 (2)	Wife employed by a Citizens Advice Bureau
Griffiths	General	Member of EERA and of the Board of Jimmy's Nightshelter
Harrison	287 (b)	County Council representative on the Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee
Jenkins	General 287 (a)	Member of EERA Lay member of Cambridgeshire Community Services
Lucas	287 (a)	Chairman of Cambridgeshire Community Services

Melton	287 (a) & 292 (2) 292 12)	Parents in receipt of adult support services Director of Cambridgeshire Horizons and member of EERA
Orgee	287 (b)	South Cambridgeshire District Council representative on the Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee
Read	General	Member of EERA and of the Cambridge Older Persons' Enterprise (COPE)
Reynolds J	General	Chairman and Director of Renewables East
Tuck	General	Member of Cambridgeshire Horizons and of the EERA Executive
Walters	287 (a)	Chairman of the Police Authority
Wilkins	287 (a)	Member of the Police Authority

## 285. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Two members of the public attended the meeting to ask questions:

- South Cambridgeshire District Councillor Susan van de Ven asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways about recent changes to rail services at the three stations between Cambridge and Royston – Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton. She particularly highlighted increases to the cost of tickets and rail passes; increases to car parking charges; and reductions to the opening hours of Meldreth booking office. She asked what steps the Council would take to support the viability of these stations, furthering its aims to reduce traffic congestion and emissions. She also asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways to attend a public meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 at 7.00 p.m. to discuss these issues with First Capital Connect.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways, Councillor Bradney, noted that he shared the concerns expressed. However, he also recognised the pressures faced by the train operators, including escalating franchise payments. He noted that the County Council had no immediate control over rail services, but agreed to write to First Capital Connect to press for short-term improvements. He also agreed to attend the public meeting, diary permitting.

- Madingley Parish Councillor Edward Byam-Cook drew attention to the proposed cycle path from Bar Hill to Coton and the work carried out on this by the joint Dry Drayton/Madingley Parish Councils Cycle Path Steering Group. He noted that the cost of the scheme was approximately £179,000 plus VAT. He asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways to include this scheme in the provisional priority list of schemes to be funded from the Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) budget of £7.2 million.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways, Councillor Bradney, explained that this scheme would not qualify for CDT funding, which was specifically for exemplar schemes. He also noted that the CDT funding comprised £3.6 million, plus £3.6 million match funding. He had been advised that the estimated costs of this scheme were £1.5-£2

million. The scheme had previously been considered by the South Cambridgeshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee. If the Parish Councils' Steering Group wished to continue to pursue the route, they should liaise with the County Council's Cycling Officer, Patrick Joyce. He also reminded members that as part of the A14 upgrade, a non-motorised route would be provided from Girton to Bar Hill.

A transcript of the questions and responses is available from Democratic Services.

## **286. CABINET MEMBERSHIP AND PORTFOLIOS**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, presented a paper setting out the names and portfolios of Cabinet members, following recent changes.

## **287. REPORTS OF CABINET MEETINGS – ITEMS FOR DETERMINATION**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

- a) Council's Integrated Plan (including Priorities, Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2009-2014, Resources and Performance Plan) (26<sup>th</sup> January 2009, Item 1)

The Leader of the Council drew attention to the following papers informing the debate on the Integrated Plan:

- The report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2009
- The Integrated Plan documents circulated with the Council agenda
- The reports of the Council's four Scrutiny Committees on the Administration's proposals
- The report of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee on the Liberal Democrat amendment.

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, and seconded by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property, Performance, People, Policy and Law, Councillor J Reynolds, that the recommendations on the Integrated Plan as set out in the updated Integrated Plan documents be adopted.

Councillors Williamson, Batchelor, Butcher and Higginson respectively moved the receipt of the reports of the two meetings of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee; the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee; the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee; and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Tuck opened the debate on the Integrated Plan on behalf of the Cabinet. Councillors Jenkins and Sales responded on behalf of the Liberal Democrat and Labour groups respectively.

Councillors Williamson, Batchelor and Butcher in their capacity as Chairmen and Councillor Higginson in his capacity as Vice-Chairman spoke to the reports of the four Scrutiny Committees.

Members then debated Sections 1 to 3 of the Integrated Plan and the Service-specific proposals.

### **Sections 1 to 3 of the Integrated Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Performance, People, Policy and Law, Councillor J Reynolds, introduced these sections of the Plan, commenting on Cambridgeshire's grant settlement, the Council Tax increase and proposals for savings and expenditure.

Councillor Jenkins commented that the priorities contained in the Integrated Plan were unexceptional, but expressed concern that the layering of objectives could make it difficult to judge how well words were translated into action. He also questioned whether the proposals were realistic and sustainable.

Councillor Ballard drew attention to the transfer of functions from hospitals to local authorities arising from the Government's increasing emphasis on helping people to live and die at home. This was incurring increasing costs for local authorities which he suggested should be accompanied by a transfer of funding, as was the case for other transfers of functions.

Councillor Huppert expressed concern that much of the funding being badged as additional investment would in fact be used to meet inflation, to enable existing services to be maintained and not new services to be funded.

### **Children and Young People's Services**

The Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, explained that the aim of the proposals was as a minimum to maintain services at their existing level, and to prepare for the additional challenges that were likely to result from the economic downturn. There were also a number of priority areas for investment, including early support for children and their families through the Parent Support Advisers, and the Safer Schools Partnership in Wisbech which was being match-funded by the Police.

Councillor Hughes emphasised the importance of play and of activities such as music, drama and support, for all children and in particular to help reduce anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Batchelor expressed concern at the proposal to shift resources for locality teams away from areas of lower need. He commented that universal services should not be reduced in some areas at the expense of others, and that the aim for all areas should be at least to sustain services at their existing level, if not to improve them.

Councillor Ballard expressed concern that Cambridgeshire Music was continuing to overspend and that it could be challenging to bring this service to breakeven within three years as planned, given the national dispute over pay and conditions. He urged that the service be protected, given its cultural importance. On education other than at school, he

noted that head teachers were supportive of devolved funding and the new Behaviour Improvement Partnerships, and hoped that this would lead to improved support for young people. Lastly, he highlighted the pressure on primary schools in Cambridge and the need to seek funding for additional places.

Councillor Kenney commended the proposals, particularly where services would be remodelled to ensure value for money, for example in relation to respite care and out of County placements.

Councillor Downes commented that it was difficult to distinguish between genuine improvements to services and investment to maintain services at their current level. He emphasised that children and young people's services were not well funded and hoped that it would be possible to meet the aspirations set out in the Integrated Plan.

Summing up, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, recognised the various challenges highlighted by the speakers but emphasised that the aim in all instances was to use resources as effectively as possible

### **Environment Services**

The Cabinet Member for the Economy, Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Brown, reminded members that this budget intended to meet the challenges faced by Cambridgeshire as the fastest growing County in the country. It also sought to promote economic prosperity; the Cabinet Member particularly highlighted opportunities for tourism in Cambridgeshire linked to the 2012 Olympics.

Councillor Hughes asked how demography could be relevant to funding for street lighting.

Councillor Batchelor asked whether there would be any improvement to the highways maintenance budget for 2009/10, given that funding had run out mid-year in 2008/09.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways explained that demography was relevant to street lighting since additional lights would be required in new communities. He emphasised that the budget had been developed in response to issues raised by Cambridgeshire residents, its aim being to keep people moving safely. There would be significant investment in road safety initiatives and schemes; in footways, especially close to sheltered schemes; and in community transport. A budget had also been set aside to ensure that the Council would be able to engage fully in any inquiry relating to the A14 upgrade.

### **Community and Adult Services**

The Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, explained that the key aims for adult support services were to invest in preventative measures; to offer service users greater choice and control; and to help more people to live independently at home. For communities, £500,000

had been allocated to support the voluntary and community sector during the economic downturn, £100,000 for learning centres in Fenland and £35,000 for activities linked to the 2012 Olympics.

Councillor Carter expressed concern at proposed cuts to funding for adult learning. She noted that adult education was key to employability, particularly during a period of recession, and suggested that cuts to this service would result in greater pressures elsewhere.

Councillor Kenney welcomed the work being done in Adult Support Services both to increase life expectancy and to reduce the length of illness experienced in old age. She noted that statistics on these issues were poorer for Fenland and therefore welcomed investment in learning centres in the District, since better education and higher aspirations were key to good health.

Councillor Ballard emphasised the need to scrutinise the figures in the adult support services budget very closely, since different services were faring very differently; for example, the Integrated Community Equipment Service was receiving a significant increase in funding, whereas the increase for older people's services was below inflation. He expressed concern at the projected demographic pressures on learning disability services and questioned whether the proposed budget would be sufficient to meet these. He also expressed concern that there had been no detailed investigation to date into why Cambridgeshire's pressures in this area were much greater than other local authorities'.

Councillor Hughes emphasised the need for effective partnership working with colleagues in the Mental Health Trust, since the number of people requiring the support of mental health services was likely to increase during the economic downturn.

Councillor Downes expressed serious concern at the risks associated with efficiency savings on independent sector adult support services, £3 million in 2009/10 and £2 million in 2010/11. He commented that this was of particular concern giving the growing demands on these services.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Pegram, emphasised that the intention of the proposals was to promote good health and wellbeing and to delay or reduce the need for social care services. There would be a focus on service transformation throughout the year, with contracts being renegotiated to achieve better value for money, but only where this would not be to the detriment of service users.

### **Corporate Services and Chief Executive's Department**

The Cabinet Member for Customer Service, Transformation and Special Projects, Councillor Criswell, highlighted the 5.8% efficiency savings proposed, almost double the amount required by Government. He emphasised that the Council would continue to invest in service transformation. He also commented that in his view, the level of reserves was appropriate to shield the Council against unexpected events.

Councillor Jenkins emphasised that reserves should be used only to manage fluctuations, not to address increased demand for services. He noted that the Integrated Plan included approximately 100 new jobs; with redundancies in other areas, this equated to a net gain of approximately 30 posts. He cautioned against expanding the establishment too much during a period of economic recession.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Performance, People, Policy and Law, Councillor J Reynolds, emphasised the work being done to reduce back office costs, including the shared services programme, insurance savings, Workwise [the office accommodation strategy] and mobile and flexible working.

## **General Debate**

One amendment was proposed under this heading:

### Liberal Democrat Group Amendment

The Liberal Democrat amendment was proposed by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Harrison. Paper copies were circulated at the meeting and the full text is attached as Appendix 1 to the signed copy of the minutes.

Introducing the amendment, Councillor Jenkins explained that its purpose was to respond to Cambridgeshire residents by investing in issues they supported, such as community policing, reductions to speed limits and improved maintenance of roads, footpaths and cycleways; and to set a lower Council Tax increase, 2.45% in 2009/10 and 3.6% in 2010/11. This would be achieved by making use of significant funds in reserves and by making savings, including the withdrawal of the proposed £690,000 for locality budgets.

Members speaking against the amendment:

- Questioned whether it was realistic or responsible simultaneously to reduce income and increase expenditure. Concern was expressed that such measures could inappropriately raise residents' expectations.
- Expressed concern that the proposals included unacceptably high levels of risk:
  - It was not appropriate to reduce the Council's reserves during a time of such economic uncertainty, particularly given that the economic downturn was likely to be prolonged. In particular, the proposal to reduce the Insurance reserve was high-risk, since the recession was likely to intensify the developing claims culture, and the recent severe weather could also result in an increased number of claims.
  - It would be very risky to remove the £3.2 million allowed for inflation given continuing pressures in some areas, for example services for older people and for children and young people.



- Proposed savings from renegotiating school transport and highways maintenance contracts would not be achievable in the timescale proposed. On school transport in particular, the Council had approximately 800 contracts, many of them short-term, meaning that it would not be realistic to negotiate £1 million of savings in the financial year just about to start. In addition, comparisons with other local authorities' costs on home to school transport were not helpful; comparisons with Suffolk which had a middle school system were particularly inappropriate; also Cambridgeshire tended to have larger schools with larger catchment areas than many other localities. The proposals also did not take into account home to school transport for children with special educational needs.
- Expressed concern that the proposals relating to community policing had not been discussed with the Police Authority representative on Cambridgeshire Together or other key people in the Police Authority. Some members expressed concern that it would not be appropriate to spend part of the County Council's precept on services that were the responsibility of another public authority.
- Expressed concern that the proposal to deliver weekly youth services in 100 villages halls in the County at a cost of £350,000 a year was not realistic. It was suggested that room hire costs alone would take up most of this sum, before costs of staffing, equipment, storage, travel and administration had been taken into account. In addition, it was noted that village halls were heavily used, meaning that space was unlikely to be available to deliver the services proposed.
- Noted that the use of the £690,000 set aside in the Administration's proposals for locality budgets would be widely discussed. It was not proposed to allocate each Councillor an individual budget; rather, the money was likely to be used by involving local communities, for example through Neighbourhood Panels. Decisions would take into account the outcomes of the current pilot of participatory budgeting in Huntingdonshire.

Members speaking in support of the amendment:

- Emphasised that considerable work had been put in by the Liberal Democrat Group, in consultation with officers, to ensure the proposals were realistic and could be subject to thorough review by Scrutiny.
- Noted that the Liberal Democrat proposals reflected residents' priorities; for example, much of the correspondence members received was about highways maintenance. The proposals also reflected the Group's wish to keep the Council Tax increase as low as possible, which was particularly relevant during this time of economic downturn.
- Noted that the Administration's budget proposals also included a high level of risk, particularly in relation to services for children and young

people, disabled adults and older people; a degree of risk was inevitable given the range of the Council's services and the challenges the Council faced. Similarly, the Administration's proposals also included some use of reserves, reduced inflation assumptions and additional borrowing. The differences between the two sets of proposals was political and reflected different ambitions and concerns. Members emphasised that the Council's financial officers had confirmed that the Liberal Democrat proposals were financially viable.

- Noted with regard to specific proposals that:
  - A 0.3% saving on IT was modest relative to the savings on IT being sought in commercial organisations.
  - There was little information about how Cambridgeshire's costs for home to school transport compared with those of other local authorities, making it appropriate to carry out further investigations. Many home to school transport contracts were very short, for example 42 days, meaning that it would be possible to renegotiate them quickly.
  - The figure for investment in youth services had been provided by the Head of the Youth Service. The expectation was that most villages would welcome increased youth provision and would not charge for the use of village halls.
  - The proposal to enhance support to young carers had been developed following discussion with the Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Children and Young People's Services.
  - The proposals relating to additional police had been developed following a conversation with the Police Finance Director, who had provided the figures. Additional police would contribute directly to the achievement of Local Area Agreement performance indicators on community safety. In terms of precepting to enhance another public authority's services, it was noted that many Parish Councils already did this to enhance the County Council's budgets for roads.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups in favour, Conservatives against.]

Speaking on the main motion, Councillor Moss-Eccardt expressed a number of concerns about the way in which the Integrated Plan had been prepared. These included the fact that the outcome of the public consultation had been reported to Cabinet only as the final proposals had been presented for approval, and the change to the proposals between Cabinet and Council, which had made it very difficult to scrutinise the proposals effectively.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Performance, People, Policy and Law, Councillor J Reynolds, reminded members that the Cabinet decision on the Integrated Plan had included a

delegation to the Leader of the Council and supporting officers to agree any final adjustments to the Council recommendation; it had been appropriate to use this delegation to respond to changing circumstances. With regard to Cambridgeshire's funding from central Government, he suggested that average funding was not sufficient, given the rate of growth in Cambridgeshire and the County's role in driving the national economy.

Councillor Harrison suggested that it was not realistic for Cambridgeshire to expect higher levels of Government grant, given that it ranked as the fifth wealthiest county in Britain.

The Leader of the Council then summed up on the main motion, emphasising the need to retain as much flexibility as possible to enable the Council and partners to work together effectively during the economic downturn.

Council then voted on the substantive motion and it was resolved:

1. To approve the current draft sections 1 and 2 of the Integrated Plan, including the strategic objectives, action plan and performance targets
2. To delegate responsibility for agreeing any final changes to the Integrated Plan (section 1 and 2) to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of People and Policy and the Director of Finance, Property and Performance (as outlined in section 3 of the Council report)
3. To approve the Office cash limits as set out in Table 4.3.1 (page 8 of section 4 (Finance Report) of the Integrated Plan (yellow pages))
4. To approve a County Budget Requirement in respect of general expenses applicable to the whole County area of £327,953,401
5. To approve a recommended County Precept for Council Tax from District Councils of £218,864,115. (To be received in ten equal instalments in accordance with the "fall-back" provisions of the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 1995)
6. To approve a Council Tax for each Band of property, based on the number of 'Band D' equivalent properties notified to the County Council by the District Councils (214,886):

<b>Band</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>Band</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>
A	£678.18	E	£1,243.33
B	£791.21	F	£1,469.39
C	£904.24	G	£1,695.45
D	£1,017.27	H	£2,034.54

7. To approve the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy as set out in section 4.6 (pages 17-21 of section 4 (Finance Report) of the Integrated Plan (yellow pages))

8. To note the report of the Director of Finance, Property and Performance on the levels of reserves and robustness of the estimates as set out in section 4.7 (pages 22-25 of section 4 (Finance Report) of the Integrated Plan (yellow pages))
9. To approve Capital Payments in 2009-10 up to £140.3m net of slippage arising from:
  - i. Commitments from schemes already approved; and
  - ii. The consequences of new starts (for the five years 2009-10 to 2013-14) listed within the Office reports that follow, subject to the receipt of appropriate capital resources and confirmation of individual detailed business cases.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour, Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups against.]

- b) Cambridge Fringes Joint Policy Committee [Section 29 Committee] (16<sup>th</sup> December 2008, Item 1)

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways, Councillor Bradney, seconded by the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Pegram, and agreed unanimously to:

- i) Approve for inclusion in the draft Order a six-month period between the date of the Order creating the Section 29 Committee and submission of its Local Development Scheme;
- ii) Approve for inclusion in the draft Order that the first meeting held after 31<sup>st</sup> May in any year should be the annual meeting of the Committee.

## **288. WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Two written questions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Higginson had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways, Councillor Bradney, about the adoption of roads in Ely
- Councillor Harrison had asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, about the adoption of a Fairtrade policy and the acquisition of Fairtrade status by the Council.

The responses were circulated at the Council meeting and copies are available from Democratic Services.

## **289. ORAL QUESTIONS**

Nine oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Sales asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways, Councillor Bradney, whether the Council would review its policy

of not gritting cycleways and pavements, particularly in view of the number of recent accidents on Riverside in Cambridge. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways noted that there was a policy governing when cycleways and pavements were gritted. The full policy would be reviewed in the summer, possibly through the Scrutiny process.

- Councillor Whelan noted that the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways had previously undertaken to review the Council's policy on interactive speed signs. She asked when this review would be carried out, and when residents of Grantchester in particular would receive feedback on this review. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways explained that the policy was reviewed annually and noted that a paper on interactive signs had recently been circulated to members. Grantchester residents would receive a response soon.
- Councillor Stone expressed concerns about the performance of Citi bus services, especially the one serving Duxford and Whittlesford, and asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways what he was doing to address the situation. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways reported that he had recently met with the Managing Director of Stagecoach and would continue to work with Stagecoach to ensure that effective services were run.
- Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, about community use of schools, particularly highlighting the swimming pool at The Grove School, which was currently out of use, and Orchard Park Primary School, whose burglar alarm system made out of hours use very difficult. Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked whether community use was being factored in for schools included in the Building Schools for the Future programme. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children confirmed that he continued fully to support the community use of school buildings. He agreed to send a written response on the issues relating to The Grove School and to Orchard Park.
- Councillor Carter asked the Cabinet Member for Children whether Cambridgeshire school meals, especially those provided at secondary schools, were meeting nutritional requirements. The Cabinet Member for Children confirmed that all school meals provided by Cambridgeshire Catering Services met School Food Trust standards. Other providers were also aware of the required standards.
- Councillor Hughes asked the Cabinet Member for Children how money available to develop play facilities in the County was being allocated. The Cabinet Member for Children agreed to send a written response.
- Councillor Ballard asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways whether, in view of the recent bad weather, the surplus on the Council's gritting budget was still intact. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways explained that this was a five-year rolling budget. He also noted that the Council had recently written to Government requesting additional assistance.

- Councillor Bourke drew attention to the poor condition of the Romsey section of Mill Road in Cambridge, which had been exacerbated by the recent bad weather. He expressed concern that recent patches to the road had lasted only days. He urged the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways to instigate major structural repairs both to this road and other similar roads in the County. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways noted that this was a national problem, due to the recent bad weather; assistance had been sought from Government and was awaited. In addition, the October programme of works had already been circulated to members.
- Councillor King reminded members that at the last Council meeting, he had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways to do all he could to ensure a speedy resolution to the roadworks on Cromwell Road in Wisbech associated with the new Lidl store. He expressed concern that these were now running two months over the Council's deadline. He also expressed concern at the poor and dangerous condition of the A47 between Rings End and Wisbech. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways expressed disappointment that the Cromwell Road roadworks had not been resolved and agreed to raise these again. He noted that the A47 was the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

A transcript of the questions and responses is available from Democratic Services.

## **290. MOTIONS**

No motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

## **291. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

The following changes to Committee memberships were proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Orgee, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Oliver, and agreed unanimously to appoint:

- Councillor Hyams to replace Councillor Criswell as a member of the Development Control Committee
- Councillors Harper and K Reynolds to the two vacancies for substitute members of the Development Control Committee
- Councillor Walters to the vacancy for a substitute member on the Audit and Accounts Committee
- Councillors Bates and West to the vacancies for substitute members on the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor West to the vacancy for a substitute member on the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Hensley to the pool of members from which the Service Appeals Committee is drawn.

## 292. REPORTS OF THE CABINET – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### Report of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2008

#### 2) Introduction of Self-Directed Support into Adult Support Services

Councillor Ballard welcomed the additional flexibility associated with self-directed support, but expressed concern that the initiative could leave vulnerable at risk of abuse, potentially even from members of their own families. He emphasised the need for effective safeguards and monitoring of expenditure.

Councillor Downes also welcomed the initiative but expressed concern at the risks involved in its rollout. He noted that a report recently shared with members of a Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee sub-group had identified eleven risks, ten of them ranked as high and one as medium.

Councillor Jenkins welcomed the initiative but sought assurance that there would be sufficient funds available to support its implementation. He also asked what steps would be taken to ensure that the Council had appropriately skilled officers available to support the initiative.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Pegram, confirmed that there would be appropriate commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements in place. He also noted that separate funding would be received from Government to support implementation.

#### 3) Accident Remedies and Traffic Management Programme: Medium-Sized Schemes

Councillor Stone welcomed the inclusion of the Abington A1307 scheme in the capital programme. He asked whether the Flint Cross upgrade listed in 2008/09 had now been dropped.

Councillor Bourke expressed disappointment that only two schemes were being taken forward, both relatively small. He expressed concern that the list of potential schemes was lengthening and noted that this could be addressed if more funding were made available.

Councillor Williamson highlighted the A10 Slap-Up junction, which had the highest accident score of the schemes listed. He noted that he had made some suggestions for improvements at this site, which officers had welcomed, and asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways to see if these could be further pursued.

Councillor Broadway highlighted two Soham schemes that had been removed from the list. She asked whether there was any way these schemes could be resubmitted, other than waiting to see if the accident score for the sites increased.

Councillor Moss-Eccardt questioned whether road safety was the Administration's highest priority, given the limited investment in these

schemes and its expenditure elsewhere. He noted that some of the schemes had been proposed some time previously, and asked whether all of the prioritisation scores were up to date.

Councillor Shuter noted that the Council's current review of speed limits was focussing on A and B roads. He asked for flexibility also to include C roads, in small villages where lower speed limits would be beneficial.

Councillor Read suggested that Huntingdon Garden and Leisure Centre should be asked to contribute to the proposed improvements to the A1123, since they were a major generator of traffic in this area.

Councillor Sales expressed disappointment that the Wadloes Road scheme in Cambridge had scored only fourth. He sought assurance that schemes were rescored as circumstances changed. He also sought assurance that the review of speed limits would apply to urban as well as rural areas.

Councillor McCraith expressed disappointment that the A10 Frog End scheme had been removed from the list, given the high accident score of this site.

Councillor Batchelor questioned whether the scored schemes had been shared with the South Cambridgeshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee (AJC). He welcomed the inclusion of the main A1307 scheme but expressed disappointment that the Bartlow Crossroads scheme had been removed from the list.

Councillor Hughes drew attention to the human and healthcare costs of accidents and suggested that these be taken into account, as well as the capital costs of the proposed schemes.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways explained that this was a two-year programme. The Flint Cross scheme was a priority and would be completed. He emphasised that resources were finite and that the scoring mechanism was used to ensure appropriate prioritisation. Scores would be reviewed and kept up to date. He agreed to discuss the Slap-Up junction further with Councillor Williamson, and to check whether the scoring sheet had been shared with the South Cambridgeshire AJC. On the speed limit review, he explained that this was a Government requirement and had to be completed by 2011. Resources were limited and so the current process had been agreed. The specific issue of 20mph speed limits was being considered separately and would be brought through the political process shortly.

#### 4) Economic Participation Investment Plan



5) Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

Councillors Kent and Harrison sought assurance that the southern section of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway would still be delivered and asked, if so, if it would be delayed by any more than the known delay to the northern section. Councillor Kent also asked how the section of the route adjacent to the gas main was being managed.

Councillor Sales asked whether funding for the Guided Busway associated with new developments along its route would be affected by the economic downturn.

Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked whether, once open, the Guided Busway would be gritted during bad weather before the rest of the road network or afterwards.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways confirmed that the southern section would be completed, with the contractors turning to this section once the northern section was complete. He reported that Transco were putting a wrapping around the gas main to prolong its life and minimise future maintenance; this was not expected to have a significant impact on the construction of the southern section. Prudential borrowing would be used to manage any delay in the receipt of Section 106 funding resulting from the economic downturn. The Guided Busway would be gritted in the same way as any other major route.

6) Local Government Finance Settlement: Council Representation

7) Strategic Policy Advice for the Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England

8) Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee Member-Led Review of Mental Health Services for Children and Young People Aged 0-19 (including Pre-Birth Influences) and Cabinet Response

Councillor Hughes reported that she had attended a Governors' meeting at the Mental Health Trust the previous day, at which this report had been welcomed. She commended the report as a good example of partnership working.

Report of the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> January 2009

2) Support for the Voluntary Sector during the Economic Downturn

Given that the economic downturn was likely to be lasting, Councillor Ballard expressed concern that the £500,000 of support agreed for the voluntary sector for 2009/10 would be withdrawn again the following year. He emphasised that agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureaux would need ongoing support. He also asked the Council to take into account other similar agencies working on these issues.

Councillor Jenkins asked for a forward programme of when the allocated funding would be spent.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, noted that detailed information would be brought to the March meeting of the Adults and Communities Policy Development Group. He confirmed that some funding had been allocated in the current year and that in addition, Service Level Agreements had been signed with the Citizens Advice Bureaux and Advice for Life, to enable them to deal with another 250 cases per District per year to the end of March 2010 on welfare and debt, and 250 cases Countywide per year on employment issues.

- 3) Alignment of Countywide and Council Goals
- 4) Extension of School Age Range: Cottenham Village College
- 5) Integrated Finance and Performance Report: October 2008
- 6) Sawston to Abington Cycleway

Councillor Stone expressed his support for this scheme. He noted that a campaign was developing locally for an alternative route, parallel to the A505. Whilst he also supported a route along the A505, he would be supporting the original scheme in the first instance.

- 7) Cambridge City Council Parking Services Agreement

Councillor Harrison reminded members that the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee had considered a call-in of this decision the previous week. She expressed disappointment at the Committee's decision to take no further action, especially since the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways at the meeting and the Director of Highways and Access in a subsequent e-mail had both acknowledged that a number of important issues had been raised.

Councillor Jenkins noted that the Committee had been advised of previously undisclosed efficiency savings relating to the decision, and requested details of these.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways, Councillor Bradney, welcomed the Committee's decision not to delay implementation of the decision, but confirmed that he had taken members' comments on board. He confirmed that he would provide the detail on the efficiency savings.

- 8) Cambridge Central Area Bus Stop Capacity Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Highways and Infrastructure reported that following the two call-ins of this decision, the Environment and Community Services Committee had agreed to make comments to Cabinet.

Councillor Griffiths commended the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Butcher, on his handling of the call-in, and expressed hope that Cabinet would act on the comments being sent back by the Committee.

9) Annual Performance Assessment of Social Care Services for Adults in Cambridgeshire and Action Plan

Councillor Hughes and the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Pegram, congratulated the Director of Adult Support Services, Claire Bruin, on the progress being made in adults' social care services.

10) Annual Performance Assessment of Children's Services

Councillor Downes welcomed Cambridgeshire's overall scores, but expressed some concern in relation to the score of 2 for Staying Safe. Under Enjoy and Achieve, he noted that Cambridgeshire's 16+ exam results the previous year had been above the national average, but that the contextual value added scores for this peer group had been below the benchmark, in part because there was a much wider range between schools within the County as compared with the ranges between schools in comparative local authorities. He asked what actions the Council would be taking to address this.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, noted that the Council would be reviewing its contextual value added score, partly through work on the Government's 'Coasting Schools' initiative. He thanked officers for their hard work and achievements but noted that there was no scope for complacency. On Staying Safe in particular, the Council would work hard to address existing challenges, together with emerging issues relating to the economic downturn.

11) Equality Standard for Local Government: Self-Assessment

Councillor Jenkins expressed concern that the Council was working towards only Level 3 of the Equality Standard's five levels. He suggested that the Council should have higher aspirations.

Councillor Hughes expressed disappointment that women were not better represented in the Council's senior management.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, emphasised that the Council would continue to aspire and would make as much progress as possible on equality issues.

12) Key Partnerships Quarterly Monitoring Report

Councillor Jenkins asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, to use her contacts at Cambridgeshire Together and elsewhere to encourage public sector agencies to pay their bills to small organisations as promptly as possible. He also noted that central Government was asking local authorities to pay their bills within ten days of receipt, and asked how well Cambridgeshire was performing on this.

Responding, the Leader of the Council agreed that prompt payment was important and noted that this had already been discussed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

Councillor Hughes welcomed the on-line and printed advice being published by Cambridgeshire Together to help support communities during the economic downturn.

Councillor Ballard noted that the Cambridgeshire Care Partnership was now operating much more effectively, with good attendance by health colleagues. However, he expressed concern as to whether pooled budgets for older people's services would be sufficient even to maintain existing levels of service. He also noted that there were growing numbers of older people with learning disabilities, responsibility for whom passed from the Learning Disability Partnership to older people's services when they reached 65.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing noted that the Council would be working closely with NHS Cambridgeshire to develop pooled budgets. On older people with learning disabilities, he noted that people often remained in the same placement upon reaching 65, but that the funding then came from a different source.

Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked to be advised of the outcome of the viability test of Section 106 contributions relating to Northstowe, as discussed by Cambridgeshire Horizons. The Leader of the Council agreed to send a written response.

In relation to the Community Safety Strategic Partnership Board, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, encouraged members to attend a forthcoming event being organised by Community Safety and the Criminal Justice Board.

Chairman: